

JESUS' SOUL RESURRECTED

– *1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11.* – *APRIL 7.* –

Text: – "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses." – Acts 2:32.

TODAY'S STUDY leaves the words and works of Jesus and, appropriate to the Easter season, we are to consider our Lord's resurrection. At the very outset we are confronted with certain errors which have gradually crystallized around the central truths of God's Word. One of these errors is the supposition that the resurrection of the dead, which the Scriptures hold forth as the hope of the Church and of the world, is to be a resurrection of the bodies which go down into death.

This mistake has given ground for Infidelity to sneer at this precious doctrine of the Bible. We are asked, How could the dust which once constituted the bodies of thousands of millions of humanity ever be re-collected and rearranged so that we could say that *those bodies* were resurrected? The infidel urges that many of humanity have been eaten by fishes and animals, and many other corpses have been absorbed by vegetation, which in turn has been eaten time and again by man and beast, entering into the many organisms. The proposition is manifestly unanswerable, yet it does not refute the Bible teaching of the resurrection, but merely our creedal misapprehensions of the Bible teaching. What the Bible does teach is that the real man is the soul, the being, and that he persists while gradually his body keeps changing – sloughing off.

Scientists estimate that the human body undergoes a complete change every seven years, so that a man fifty years old will have lost seven different bodies through natural wastes. None of those bodies was the man himself, for he is the soul, the intelligent personality, which used those different bodies. According to the Bible, the process

of rejuvenation would have continued everlastingly had man by obedience continued in Divine favor and in the enjoyment of the everlasting life promised. It was sin, therefore, that brought the death penalty – the death of the soul. It was Adam's soul that sinned, it was Adam's soul that died. "In the day that *thou* eatest thereof *thou* shalt surely die"; "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The result of this Divine sentence upon man would have been extinction – he would have been on the same plane as the brute, without a provision for eternal life, had not God in great mercy provided a redemption – that Jesus Christ by the grace of God should taste death for every man. The death which Jesus experienced was exactly the same kind as the one which destroyed Adam – the *soul* of Jesus died, as the ransom price for the soul of Adam (including Adam's posterity). Thus we read of Jesus, "He poured out His soul unto death"; "He made His soul an offering for sin."

It is by virtue of this corresponding price which Jesus paid that ultimately Adam and all of his posterity, every soul of man, will be granted a release from the death penalty – a resurrection from the dead. It will be a resurrection, not of the dead bodies, but of the dead souls. In the resurrection God will give to each soul a body as it has pleased Him. – I Cor. 15:38.

The few during this Age who have become followers of Jesus, begotten of the Holy Spirit, will be granted spirit bodies like to the Savior's. The remainder of mankind, not having been begotten of the Holy Spirit, will in the resurrection be granted human bodies, the same as they previously had; and their raising up will bring them eventually to all the perfection of the first Adam, unless they refuse the grace of God, in which event they will die the Second Death, from which there is to be no resurrection.

It is because God has provided for such a resurrection of the souls of men that the Scriptures speak of humanity as not being *dead* in the same sense that the brute beasts are dead – actually. On the contrary,

they speak of the souls of men as being *asleep* – awaiting the resurrection, when they shall be quickened to life, in conjunction with the bodies which God will supply at that time – earthly bodies to mankind in general, heavenly bodies for the saintly few who will receive the Kingdom.

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St. Peter on the Day of Pentecost declared that the Holy Spirit then bestowed came as a result of our Redeemer's death and resurrection and ascension on high. It proved that He had appeared in heaven on behalf of those who desired to be His followers, His Bride class. St. Peter argues backwards to prove that while the sacrifice of Jesus, finished at Calvary, was to pay for Divine reconciliation, nevertheless there could have been no reconciliation if Jesus had remained dead. Hence he laid stress upon the fact of His resurrection, and he reminds us that this was foretold. The Prophet David declared, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in *sheol*, nor suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." – Acts 2:27. [R4994 : page 100]

St. Peter's quotation of this, in the Greek, substitutes the word *hades* for *sheol*, showing that the two words have the same meaning – the tomb, the state of the dead. St. Peter points out that the Prophet could not have used the word respecting himself, because *his* soul *was* left in *hades*, and his flesh did see corruption. St. Peter said, "David has not ascended into heaven, and his sepulcher is with us to this day." (Acts 2:34,29.) He proceeds to point out that the words were a prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus, that His soul, poured out in death as the redemption price for Adam's soul and for the race, was not left in death, in *sheol*, in *hades*, but He was raised from the dead.

St. Paul tells us that "He was put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit." He declared that Jesus, in His resurrection, was exalted to a higher than human nature, to a higher than the angelic nature – far above angels and principalities and powers – the divine nature.

OUR DIFFICULTY SOLVED

Many have supposed that the fact that our Lord appeared as a man to His disciples after His resurrection proves that He is *still* a human being, "a little lower than the angels." This is a great mistake. He was the Church's Forerunner, and St. Paul explains the Church's resurrection, saying, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, raised a spirit body." Hence the resurrection of Jesus must have been as a Spirit Being. Again we read, "Now the Lord is that Spirit." – 2 Cor. 3:17.

In considering the Lord's eight appearances to His faithful ones after His resurrection, we should remember that He had two purposes to serve: (1) He wished them to know that He was no longer dead. (2) He also wished them to know that, resurrected, He was a Spirit Being of the highest order, with all the privileges and powers that spirit beings like the angels exercise. As angels could materialize and appear in the flesh and then disappear, and had done so in the past, so did Jesus. In order that they might not misunderstand He appeared in different forms; on two of the occasions, in forms representing the Crucified One; on the six other occasions, in various forms, as the gardener, the sojourner, etc.

In the last verse of our study the Apostle sums up the essence of his preaching, saying, "So we preach and so ye believe." This, in the first verse of our study, St. Paul calls the Gospel; and the word "Gospel" signifies "good tidings," which St. Paul and the other Apostles preached, namely, that God, in His own due time, four thousand years after sin had entered the world, had provided a Redeemer, who had died a ransom price for the man Adam. The Redeemer had risen that He might, as Jehovah's Anointed One, the Messiah, confer upon the human race the blessed opportunity for restitution to all that was lost in Adam, and redeemed at Calvary.

But before this could be accomplished, the Church, the Bride class, must be selected from amongst mankind, to be the Second

Adam's Bride, on the same plane of glory as the Second Adam, for the regeneration of all the willing and obedient to human perfection – all that was lost.

